

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 182809

72

ORIGIN TAR-02

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-14

RSC-01 FEA-02 AGR-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

EB-11 FRB-03 H-03 INR-11 INT-08 L-03 LAB-06 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 AID-20 CIEP-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00

USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 OMB-01 SWF-02 OPIC-12 /259 R

DRAFTED BY TARIFF COMMISSION:W.HART:SMM

APPROVED BY STR:J.A.MCNAMARA

COMMERCE:B.MARSH

STATE:EB:G.STREEB

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TO USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:GATT, ETRD

SUBJECT: MTN: GATT APPLIED TARIFF RATE FILE

1. A SUGGESTED REVISION OF THE GATT SECRETARIAT'S DRAFT FOR AN EXPLANATORY NOTE ON THE MAGNETIC TAPE FORMAT FOR COUNTRY SUBMISSIONS TO THE APPLIED TARIFF RATE FILE IS BEING SENT IN SEPARATE TELEGRAM. PROPOSED CHANGES IN SECRETARIAT DRAFT CONSIST CHIEFLY IN EXPANDING AND CLARIFYING THE INSTRUCTIONS, WITH A VIEW TO MAKING THEM MORE EXPLICIT, AND HOPEFULLY ELICITING A BETTER, MORE UNIFORM PRODUCT FROM RESPONDING COUNTRIES. SOME ADDITIONS TO THE TAPE FORMAT (SUCH AS A MORE ELABORATE ANNOTATIONS CROSS-REFERENCE AND A CODE IDENTIFYING THE TYPE OF RATE) HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE FUTURE USEFULNESS OF FILE IN ADP APPLICATIONS.

2. CHIEF SUBSTANTIVE DEFICIENCY IN THE SECRETARIAT'S DRAFT
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PAGE 02 STATE 182809

IS FAILURE TO SPECIFY EXACTLY HOW CROSS-REFERENCE LINK IS

TO BE MADE BETWEEN THE TARIFF DATA RECORD AND THE ANNOTATIONS RECORD. WE PROPOSE THAT THE EXISTANCE OF AN ANNOTATION SHOULD BE FLAGGED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TARIFF DATA RECORD, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE ITEM NUMBER, RATHER THAN AT THE END OF THE RECORD. WE ALSO PROPOSE THAT THE PARTICULAR FIELD TO WHICH THE ANNOTATION APPLIES BE FLAGGED. SECRETARIAT MAY CONSIDER THIS UNNECESSARILY ELABORATE, BUT WE THINK IT WOULD BE HIGHLY USEFUL IN FUTURE PRINT-OUTS OF THE FILE, ESPECIALLY IF THE ANNOTATIONS ARE SEPARATED FROM THE TARIFF DATA (PRESENTED, FOR EXAMPLE, AS AN APPENDIX TO THE TARIFF DATA TABULATION).

3. IN THE RATE OF DUTY FIELDS WE SUGGEST THE ADDITION OF A CODE IDENTIFYING THE TYPE OF RATE. IN OUR WORK WITH THE US TARIFF, WE HAVE FOUND THIS USEFUL FOR COMPUTER SORTING OF PRODUCTS SUBJECT TO THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF RATES. IN THE GATT TARIFF FILE, IT WOULD BE ALSO USEFUL AS A CHECK AGAINST THE RATE INFORMATION SUPPLIED FOR A TARIFF ITEM.

4. SPACE FOR THE ANNOTATION REFERENCES AND THE TYPE OF DUTY CODE HAS BEEN OBTAINED BY REDUCING THE 4 RATE-OF-DUTY FIELDS BY 5 SPACES EACH.

5. WE HAVE ALSO SUGGESTED A CHANGE IN THE SECRETARIAT'S METHOD OF HANDLING AVE'S WHICH WOULD PUT ALL AVE'S IN THE SAME FORMAT, THEREBY FACILITATING MACHINE PROCESSING AND CONSISTENCY IN THE RECORD. IT IS UNNECESSARY TO INCLUDE A DECIMAL POINT IN THE RECORD SO LONG AS IT IS SPECIFIED THAT ALL AVE'S ARE CALCULATED TO ONE DECIMAL POINT. IN USING THE FILE, THE DECIMAL IS HANDLED IN THE PROGRAMMING. IF THE SECRETARIAT PREFERS A DECIMAL, WE PREFER EXPANDING THE AVE FIELDS BY ONE SPACE TO MAKE THE FORMAT CONSISTENT.

6. FOUR ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN OUR PROPOSED REDRAFT OF THE TAPE FORMAT AND EXPLANATORY NOTE SHOULD BE RAISED WITH THE SECRETARIAT:

A. TARIFF NUMBERS VS. STATISTICAL NUMBERS. THE US PROPOSAL FOR A TARIFF RATE FILE WAS MADE IN TERMS OF SUPPLYING THE DATA ON THE BASIS OF EITHER TARIFF NUMBER OR UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 182809

STATISTICAL NUMBERS. HOWEVER, WE CONSIDER IT MORE DESIRABLE THAT THE FILE BE IN TERMS OF THE LEGAL TARIFF NUMBER.

IF THE SECRETARIAT HAS NO OBJECTION, WE WOULD LIKE FOR THE EXPLANATORY NOTE TO SUGGEST THAT:

(I) THE TARIFF NUMBER IS PREFERRED TO THE STA-

TISTICAL NUMBER;

(II) IF DATA ARE REPORTED IN TERMS OF THE STATISTICAL NUMBER, A MAGNETIC TAPE CONCORDANCE BETWEEN THE STATISTICAL AND TARIFF NUMBERS SHOULD ACCOMPANY THE FILE;

(III) REVISE THE TAPE FORMAT TO INSERT A FIELD FOR THE STATISTICAL NUMBER BETWEEN THE RECORD ANNOTATION REFERENCE FIELD AND THE PRODUCT DESCRIPTION FIELD. OTHER COUNTRIES USING THE FILE COULD THEN INSERT THE TARIFF NUMBERS IF THEY DESIRED. SPACE FOR THE STATISTICAL NUMBER CAN BE OBTAINED BY REDUCING EACH OF THE TARIFF RATE FIELDS BY 3 TO 5 SPACES. (WE HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT 40 SPACES WILL ADEQUATELY ACCOMMODATE ALMOST ALL RATES, AND THE FEW OVERFLOWS CAN BE HANDLED IN THE ANNOTATIONS RECORD.)

B. IDENTIFY EX-OUTS. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF ALL INSTANCES WHERE A TARIFF LINE RECORD DOES NOT CORRESPOND EXACTLY TO A RATE LINE PROVISION IN THE NATIONAL CUSTOMS SCHEDULE WERE IDENTIFIED. THIS COULD BE DONE BY A CODE BETWEEN THE TARIFF NUMBER AND THE RECORD ANNOTATION REFERENCE.

C. STANDARD FORMAT FOR RATE FIELDS. THE SECRETARIAT DRAFT SAYS VIRTUALLY NOTHING ABOUT HOW RATES SHOULD BE STATED. WE HAVE SUGGESTED, AT A MINIMUM, THAT RATES SHOULD BEGIN IN THE FIRST POSITION OF THE FIELD. IT WOULD FACILITATE COMPUTER PROCESSING IF THEY WERE IN A STANDARDIZED FORMAT, AND CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THIS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE FIRST FOUR SPACES IN THE FIELD COULD BE RESERVED FOR AD VALOREM AND FREE RATES, WITH OTHER AREAS OF THE FIELD DESIGNATED FOR SPECIFIC RATES OR SPECIFIC COMPONENTS OF COMPOUND RATES. IN ALL INSTANCES, TEXTUAL QUALIFICATIONS SHOULD FOLLOW THE RATE OF DUTY.

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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 182809

D. GSP CODES. THE SECRETARIAT MIGHT CONSIDER THE INCLUSION OF A GSP CODE FOR EACH GSP RATE RECORD USING PERHAPS

THE SAME CODES AS LISTED IN ANNEX 4 TO THE DOCUMENTATION ACCOMPANYING THE 1970/71 GATT TARIFF STUDY TAPES. WHILE THE ANNOTATIONS WILL INCLUDE MORE DETAILED INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO EACH GSP RATE, INCLUSION OF THE GSP CODE WOULD FACILITATE MACHINE PROCESSING OF GSP RECORDS WHERE THE USER IS INTERESTED IN SORTING BY TYPE OF GSP REGIME. INGERSOLL

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